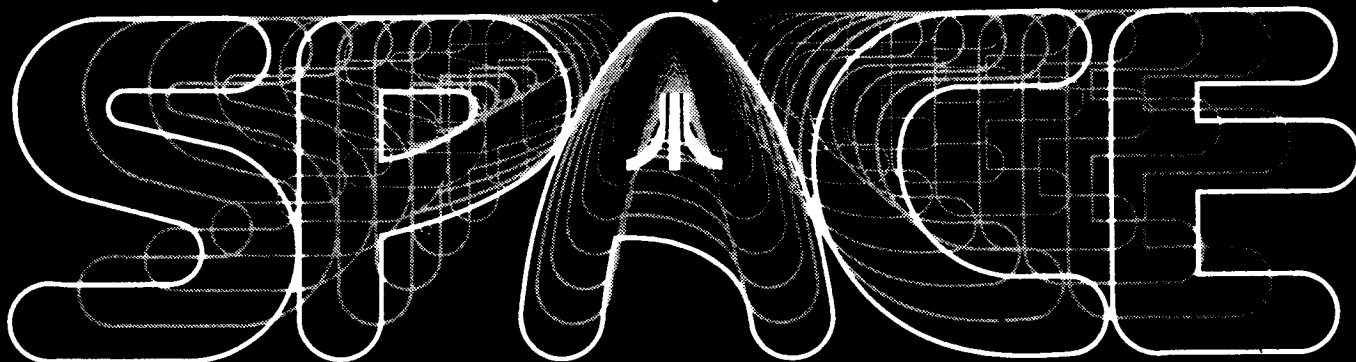


Saint Paul ATARI Computer Enthusiasts



An independent computer user group

FEBRUARY - 1985

Bytes From the Pres.

I was amazed by the number of people at our last meeting. I must apologize for the hectic nature of the meeting and its lateness, but with the recent events at Atari it couldn't be helped. I plan to start promptly this month. I know we signed up a lot of new members and sold a lot of disk of the month's. I heard that the beginner's group went well and so we will be doing that again this month. Demo's suffered a bit, but we have a new plan to separate the various groups after the business part of the meeting.

There is not much news from Atari this month, but what do you expect after last month? There are a few articles in the newsletter this month from Antic magazine, plus I will post a few more at the meeting. I will have copies of last month's meeting handouts for those that didn't make it to the meeting.

Incidentally, the Antic articles tell about "Infinity", the new integrated software package highlighted at the CES show. This was a very amazing program, for an 8-bit computer, but not nearly the measure of Lotus as stated by Antic. Also, a very interesting program called "Silent Butler" is covered in these articles. I saw this at the CES, too. It can type out checks using your own everyday checks.

We will have a Swap Meet this month. So, bring your old programs and equipment to sell or swap, or buy someone else's old program. Be sure to bring all

documentation and original materials along. We do not want to aid pirating of software.

Someone left a nice program in the "Kitchen" area at the last meeting. If it's yours, please see me at the meeting (or call me at home) to claim it. You must tell me what it is before you get it back.

On the games front, the sequel to "Miner 2049er" has just been released. It is titled "Bounty Bob Strikes Back". See my mini-review plus a demo at the meeting. I've also heard that "Mario Brothers" will be released by Atari, hopefully in the near future.

Downloaded From Compuserve

ANTIC SPECIAL BULLETIN,
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CES-ATARI FINAL WRAP-UP
by NAT FRIEDLAND, Antic Editor
SOFTWARE BREAKTHROUGHS
LAS VEGAS

Atari's CES software was in its own right as spectacular as the hardware breakthroughs on display. The star attraction was undoubtedly INFINITY - which is the next generation of sleek, powerful integrated programs.

CONTINUED -->

Infinity has specs that are more than a match for Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony. Yet it can run in as little as 64K (even on the old 800) with only the loss of a few extra features. And incredibly, it will be sold at only \$49.95 for 8-bit Ataris, the 16-bit version will be about \$70. The Tramiel Atari Corp. has shown that it is serious about holding software prices to \$49.95, which is what virtually all the advanced productivity software described in this article will cost.

I realize that Infinity sounds almost too good to be true. But Antic has seen it in operation. On one disk it contains a spreadsheet, relational database, a word processor that looks like MacWrite, a telecommunications package, graphics, icons and pull-down menus, and integrated printing. It runs in virtual memory, which means that file size is more dependent on disk capacity than on RAM.

Infinity will support the upcoming Atari local area networking (LAN) capability. And it includes multitasking -- up to 6 simultaneous operations on the ST series, 3 on the 130 XE and 2 on the 65XE.

Vincent Garafolo of Cambridge's Matrix Software, developers of Infinity, explained that they were able to get so much into a 64K memory program by two-step "optimizing" of the assembly language compilation. This procedure is usually only used in advanced military and government software.

"Most software companies don't do optimization because it's so tedious, even though it's possible to drastically reduce the size of most programs," explained Garafolo. "You don't have to be a programming genius to optimize. You just have to be willing to put in a few hundred hours of boring, painstaking line-by-line analysis."

Other impressive new software from Atari includes Silent Butler, a personal finance program that balances multiple checking and credit card accounts, and tracks tax deductions. It's most unique feature is the ability to print on your own personalized checks, using a plastic check-holder that fits into your printer.

Beginners' BASICS #2 by Bob Floyd

Well, here's the second installment of Beginner's BASICS and I still don't know much about using the translator disk because I have an 800 and don't need a translator. So, I won't be able to say much about it as promised. (Perhaps someone else can cover exactly how to use the translator disk for cartridges and disks.) What I do know is why a translator disk became necessary. Way back in the early days, Atari opened up their operating system so that software developers could write programs more easily. Atari warned them which locations (i.e., machine language subroutines - using these saves on program size and development time) were safe and which weren't. The "unsafe" locations were subject to change on future Atari computers. This warning went unheeded by many software developers and some wrote software based on unsafe locations. So, there should have been no surprise when the new XL computers were not compatible with all non-XL software. Instead, Atari ended up taking most of the blame for incompatibility. All of the recent software is compatible with all Atari computers, so most of you probably have not needed the translator disk. Since the translator uses 16K to simulate the old operating system, you must have more than 16K to use it. So, a 16K 600XL would not be able to use the translator because there would be no memory leftover for the program. Also, there is no translator available on cassette. You can purchase a translator disk from Bruce Haug, the disk librarian, for only \$4.00.

SAVE and LOAD are used for transferring programs between the computer and storage device. Storage can be on disk or cassette, but for now let's assume disk. To save a BASIC program type:

```
SAVE "D:FILENAME.EXT"
```

This saves your program on disk drive #1, since the D: refers to the default drive, which is #1. 'FILENAME' refers to a 1 to 8 character combination of letters and numbers with the first character being a letter. The '.EXT' is optional. It is known as an extender. Typically people use extenders like '.BAS' for BASIC programs, '.OBJ' for objective files (machine

language), '.LST' for LIST files (see next few paragraphs) and '.TXT' for text files (like in word processing). The extender may be 1 to 3 characters in any combination of letters and numbers. The second quotation mark is optional. To retrieve your BASIC program from the disk, type:

```
LOAD "D:FILENAME.EXT"
```

The program will be loaded back into computer memory.

You can then LIST the program. To see it on the screen, simply type LIST, or L., which is an abbreviation for LIST. This will list the whole program. To list only a portion of the program, type:

```
LIST 135,225  
or, L. 400
```

The first statement will list lines 135 through 225. The second will list line 400 only. LIST is also used for listing to the printer. Simply type:

```
LIST "P:"  
or, L. "P:",135,225
```

The first statement lists everything to the printer, whereas the second statement lists only lines 135 through to 225 to the printer. The printer is known as device "P:" and is accessed as shown above. The printer cannot handle Atari graphic characters properly, so the output may be erratic if graphic characters are used in the program. There are some commercial programs available that will list programs with all the correct looking characters to a graphics (dot-matrix) type printer like NEC or Epson. I have written a program of this type that will be available in SPACE's March disk of the month.

The cassette, disk drive and RS-232 ports can also be used this way with the LIST command. Of these, I will only cover LIST'ing to the disk drive, since that is fairly useful. The command would be:

```
LIST "D:FILENAME.EXT"  
or, L. "D:FILENAME.EXT",400
```

The first statement lists the whole program to disk under the name FILENAME.EXT. The second statement lists only line 400 to that name on the disk. The ENTER command can be used to retrieve a program LIST'ed to disk as follows:

```
ENTER "D:FILENAME.EXT"
```

The whole program from the disk will be ENTER'ed.

And now, finally down to the heart of the issue. Why should we bother to LIST to a disk when we can SAVE? To answer this takes a little more information. Programs are stored in the computer in "tokenized" form. This means that the program, as you see it, does not reside in memory. Only a representation of the program is there. This saves memory and improves program speed. The LIST command exists for our convenience so that we can view our program. In other words, LIST translates the tokens back into a form we can understand. Tokens are not the same as machine language. They are just codes for things like addition, subtraction, various functions like absolute value, program variables, etc. The computer can recognize the difference between programs stored in LIST format versus SAVE. You will get an error message if you mix up LOAD with ENTER.

LIST files are useful for transferring to other files such as word processors, bulletin boards, etc., because they are readable. That is, they are in ASCII (or ATASCII - Atari ASCII) form, which is universal. LIST file are also useful for merging with existing programs. For instance, if I wrote a program that uses a NEC printer, it probably would not work on an Epson. The simplest way to handle revisions for other printers would be to leave the original program intact and write a bunch of short programs (one for each printer) to merge with the original. A person could then LOAD the original program and then ENTER the appropriate correction program to merge with the original. This usually only takes a few program lines, with proper planning. It is not possible to merge programs with the LOAD command. This is because LOAD erases any existing program in computer memory before LOAD'ing. ENTER does not erase an existing program, but will replace existing lines if new ones have the same line number.

I hope this has been helpful and not too confusing. If so, please ask questions at the meeting. I ran out of room and time this month to cover DOS, so I will save that for next time.

January Meeting Minutes
by Joanne Floyd

The last SPACE meeting was held on January 11. Bob Floyd, the president, reported on the new products demonstrated by Atari at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Among the new products shown were the XE series of computers which have 64K RAM (65XE, 65XEP, 65XEM) or 128K RAM (130XE) and which are compatible with the 400/800 and 600/800XL series, and the ST series of computers which operate with 128K RAM (130ST) or 512K RAM (520ST) and are similar in functioning to the Macintosh but include color capabilities. Several new disk drives and printers were also demonstrated. Three handouts about the new computer systems were distributed at the meeting. If you missed the meeting and would like further information about the new systems, extra copies of the handouts are available from Bob.

In the Old/New Business section of the meeting, Bob reported that the AtariWriter printer-driver construction set will be offered as a new release by Antic magazine. He also requested that members follow his lead in writing a **BEGINNER'S BASICS** column with tips for new 800XL owners. Bruce Haug, the vice president and disk librarian, reminded members that he will make copies of old disks of the months on request. Max Feuer, the treasurer, reported that the club has \$481 in its account and that present membership is 86. Dick Johnson, the treasurer of TAIG and SYSOP of the bulletin board jointly operated by SPACE and TAIG, reported that the bulletin board now has an increased message capacity of 60 messages (the old capacity was 30) and that there are many more programs to download than were previously available. Among these programs are Antic articles listed on Compuserve.

At the end of the meeting, Frank Haug and Jon Nelson led a beginner's group for new 800XL owners in which they answered questions and demonstrated how to use the translator disk, a program which allows older Atari 400/800 programs to be run on the 800XL. (These disks are available from Bruce Haug for \$4.) Three demos were also shown. Mark Vallevand demonstrated a 1050 disk drive with the doubler modification from Spartan software using SpartaDOS. Dick Johnson demonstrated Homepak, a

combination database, wordprocessor, and telecommunications package which he highly recommends. (A group purchase of this package is available if enough club members are interested. See article elsewhere in this newsletter.) Chris Tiggeman demonstrated a solid state RAM disk.

DISK OF THE MONTH

The disk/tape of the month contains programs from the club library. The tapes can be purchased for \$3 and the disks for \$4. The group makes a small profit from the sale of these which go toward supporting some of the things the group does. Each disk/tape usually contains eight to twelve programs. Most of these programs are games with some utilities and demos mixed in. The programs are obtained from trading with other user groups and from submissions from local members. Members who submit a program will receive a disk or tape of the month free! What a deal!!

--THIS MONTH'S PROGRAMS--

1. LEFTY - Schematics for converting a joystick for use by lefty
2. SHARKEY - Eat good fish, avoid green fish and hazards
3. DRAW7 - Drawing via joystick with special features
4. TAPECPY - A tape to to tape copier.
Written by a S.P.A.C.E member
5. VOLCANO - Can you survive the eruption ?
(TEXT)
6. MAGIC - An art demo
7. BJACK - A very good black jack game
8. MAZE - Multi-level or single level visible or invisible maze
9. BUTTAPED.ISK - Copies a bootable tape to disk
10. BUDGET - Financial aid to help you balance your budget
11. STATESGA.ME - States and capitals game

For those of you who are new to the D.O.M. here are some operating hints. After you are finished with one program and you want to bring in another, simply hit the break key, and then type in RUN "D:SPMENU". This will return you to the space menu.

Not all of the programs on some of the older D.O.M.'s work I would like someone to make a list of these, and then ask for a volunteer to fix the problems and then I will make up a new disk.

Bounty Bob Strikes Back
Big Five Software
Reviewed by Bob Floyd

Bounty Bob is back and he wants to get even with Yukon Yohan and Nuclear Ned. Yes, the long awaited sequel to Miner 2049er has arrived, and in a 40K ROM cartridge to boot (well, not to boot actually). The cartridge uses bank-select to use only 16K at a time. So, it can run in an unmodified 400 or 600XL as well as the other Atari computers.

Bounty Bob must again leap, climb and "waddle" his way past the mutants to complete the mine framework. As before, he can get prizes and defeat the mutants for a short time. A few differences are that you can now control Bob's jumps somewhat for shorter jumps by pressing the trigger, waiting a few fractions of a second and then pushing the joystick left or right. A longer wait makes for a shorter jump - a necessity in some situations. Another difference is that after you die, all the prizes and completed framework on the screen are restored. BBSB features 25 incredible screens with all sorts of diabolical devices such as suction tubes, grain elevators, gravity lift, hydraulic lift, mobile suction unit, utility hoist and acid rain. I haven't seen all these devices yet since I haven't gotten past the fifth screen, but what I have seen is truly amazing. I was killed by a mutant as I entered a suction tube - the effect was amazing! The slides, transporters, cannons, moving blocks, pulverizers, etc., from Miner 2049er are also in the sequel.

BBSB is truly a worthy sequel. It uses the terrific graphics of before, plus amazing enhancements. I hear that on later screens, the mutants can use the slides and ladders. The screens start out more difficult than Miner, equivalent to about screen 5 on Miner. What with 25 screens, you might imagine that it is impossible to play all 25. This would probably be true, except that you can enter secret codes to bypass screens. However, the secret codes are revealed one at a time after completing certain screens. For instance, after reaching screen 5 and showing some proficiency, a way to warp from screen 1 to 4 is revealed to you after you've been killed off. From then on, you can press "1" and "START" together after touching a

certain prize on screen 1 and bypass screens 1, 2 and 3. I assume more of these secrets will be revealed as I get better and better.

There is a game adjustment screen for adjusting the number of lives, bonus life frequency (yes, you can get a bonus life every 10,000 points), pause capability, etc. BBSB also has the most extraordinary title screen, high score screen and high score name entry screen anywhere. These must be seen to be believed. Try deleting a letter on the high score entry screen for a real treat. Some people may say that the graphic complexity of these screens is unnecessary, but I think these screens reflect the attitude with which BBSB was written - terrific quality and value, even at the suggested retail price of \$50.00. I know that it will mean good value for my wife and me since we will undoubtedly receive many, many hours of good entertainment from BBSB, just like we did from Miner 2049er. Incidentally, you can now purchase Miner 2049er for just \$10.00 direct from Big Five Software.

I think Bounty Bob Strikes Back may just be the best game of all time for the Atari. Perhaps it is just a sign of things to come for our machines. I certainly hope so.

P.S. As a sign of things not to come, I don't really care that Electronic Arts is taking a "wait and see" attitude on Atari. Most of what they do is convert Apple programs to Atari, and you know how bad that usually is. How about some original Atari software! While they do have some good stuff, Electronic Arts certainly has had more than their share of "dogs", too. I wouldn't mind if these high strung "software artists" are left holding the bag. Whoof!

HOMEPAK GROUP PURCHASE
by Dick Johnson

Wizards Work has agreed to arrange a group purchase of HomePak the new 3 in 1 package that has been reviewed in the March Antic and January ANALOG, both of which were very favorable. The retail price of HomePak of \$49.95 and will be available for

\$35 plus tax a 30% discount. To order your copy send a check for \$37.10 to Wizards Work, Post Haste Square, County Rd. 18 & 36th Ave. No., New Hope MN. or leave a check with an officer of your User Group. No checks will be cashed until we meet our goal of 20 purchases have been met and the order sent in. The cut off date for ordering will be Feb 27 and the programs will be available at the next club meeting or may be picked up from Wizards Work after Mar 10th.

A short review: **HOMETERM** the best of the 3. Supports the 835/1030 modems, uploads and downs any size file, will capture any size file in ASCII mode, uses Smart Macros which with some modems will support auto-redial, supports Binary downloads from CompuServ and many other features. Currently will not support the MPP1000 but a fix is promised. **HOMETEXT** very easy to use word processor which will work with any printer, using windows for Menu driven options which can be bypassed after you have become familiar with them. The only thing wrong with it is the lack of memory for the text (6600 bytes, about 2-3 pages) but files can be chained together provide too for larger documents. **HOMEFIND** a simple database program which requires no previous defining of fields or files. This flexably works against it, in that generic searches cannot be done and there is no report formatting. However it can be used with HOMETEXT in a mailmerge type operation. Either the terminal program or the word processor alone is worth the \$35 price tag, with all 3 programs its a super buy.

Shopkeeper is an easy-to-use small business accounting package that also tracks inventory and generally emulates an electronic cash register. It also compiles daily reports which will be automatically transferable to the upcoming (2nd quarter) general ledger module. There will be six modules in the series.

Song Painter is a very user-friendly music construction program that replaces standard musical notation with self-explanatory colored line patterns and icons. Its three instrumental voices can be controlled almost entirely from the joystick.

In another Atari musical development, the in/out MIDI ports on the ST computers were being demonstrated driving the new Casio CZ101 \$499 synthesizer.

Reprinted from Cin'tari

XL PEEKS AND POKES

by Daniel J. Reitz

Here is some useful stuff for those now programming on an 600/800XL computer.

POKE 731,1 will turn of the computer keyboard "clicks".

POKE 731,0 turns them back on.

POKE 622,255:GR.0 allows for fine scrolling in Graphics 0 screen (scrolls 1/8 line instead of a whole line at a time).

POKE 622,0:GR.0 resets scrolling to normal.

POKE 756,204 enables built-in international character set (use with control characters).

POKE 756,224 resets your normal control characters.

POKE 621,255 disables the keyboard.

POKE 621,0 enables the keyboard.

POKE 729 with 1 to 60 for 1/60 second repeats on keys. The repeat default is set to 48 (ie. a key held down will start to repeat after 48/60th. of a second. By setting it at POKE 729,1, a key will start to repeat after 1/60th of a second.

You may include in your program a use for the HELP key. When the person using your program hits the HELP key, you can prompt them with suggestions or help in executing your program. (Such as displaying the keyboard commands to run the program, etc.)

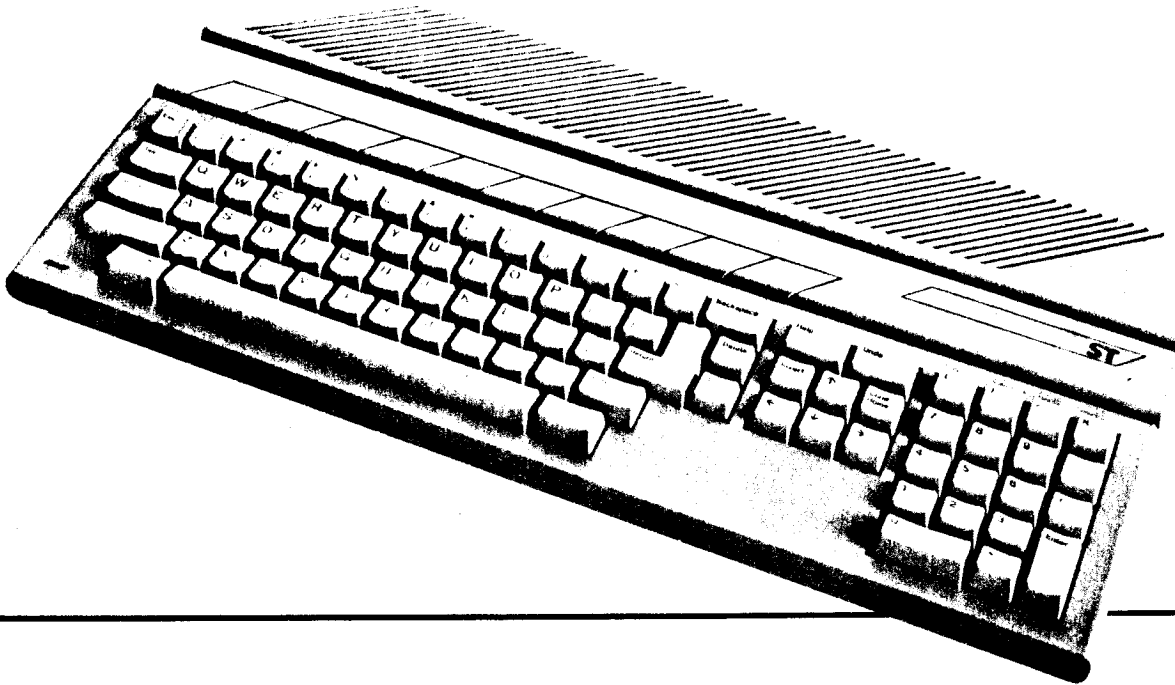
If the HELP key is pressed, PEEK(732) will return a value of 17.

If SHIFT HELP is pressed, a value of 81 will be returned.

If CONTROL HELP is pressed, you will receive a value of 145.

If you discover any more useful pokes or peeks, let me know.

Come to the SWAP
MEET! Bring a program
along to trade or sell.



130ST
520ST

S.P.A.C.E. Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Equipment/System-Used _____

Area of interest _____

Special skills, interest, info which might be shared. _____

Optional
information: Occupation _____ Employer _____

Dues: \$10.00 per year - please inclose check with application.

Mail application and dues to:
St. Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts
748 Amber Dr., Shoreview, MN 55112

WANT ADS

It is possible for members to place 'Want Ads' in this newsletter. The ads may be for selling used hardware, used software, tutoring services, or just about anything that has to do with Atari. The rates are as follows:

6 Lines \$1.25 216 Letters
1 Line .25 36 Letters

The following is a list of advertising rates for vendors or individual members.

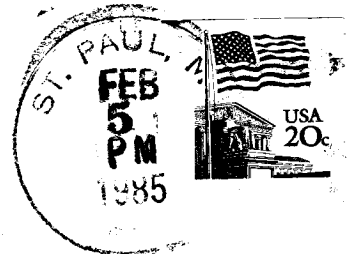
Full page \$18.00 7-1/2" X 10"
Half page 10.00 3-5/8" X 10"
Half page 10.00 7-1/2" X 5"
1/4 page 5.50 3-5/8" X 5"

All advertisements must be paid for when they are submitted. Deadline for ad placement is the last Friday of each month. To place ad or for more info, call the editor.

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Next SPACE Meeting:
Friday, February 8, 1985
8:00 P.M.

Minnesota Federal Savings & Loan
Lexington Ave. near Larpenteur
Roseville, Minnesota